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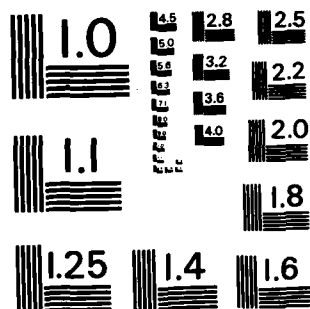
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**POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF US RELATIONS WITH
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**STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE
US ARMY WAR COLLEGE
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania**

**POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF US RELATIONS WITH
IRAN AND SAUDI ARABIA IN THE 1980'S**

Political Dimensions of the US-Iranian Relationship

by

Marvin Zonis

Political Dimensions of the US-Saudi Relationship

by

Hermann F. Ellts

10 January 1983

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POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF THE US-IRANIAN RELATIONSHIP

That a nation has no friends, only interests, has become a shibboleth for the student of international relations. Unfortunately, the shibboleth has lost much of its usefulness. For it has led to the belief that interests are, somehow, "objective" and, as a result, likely to be pursued under average, expectable conditions of interstate relations.

But all too often, the most interesting challenges to students of international relations are precisely those in which the "average, expectable conditions" do not pertain. "Interests" turn out under different conditions not to be objective at all but very much a matter for definition, for specification by the political system. It would be hard to argue convincingly, for example, that Israel and the so-called rejectionist states in the Arab world have fulfilled any objectively ascertainable interests in maintaining their unabated hostility for the past decade. This is, of course, different from arguing that their state behaviors cannot be explained at all. Rather, it is to be argued that in the most significant areas of their existence, states strive to pursue a variety of purposes, that those purposes are not all mutually compatible, and that any given political system is challenged to establish those interests which it will seek to fulfill.

Nowhere is this apparent truth more consistently manifest than in revolutionary regimes. By their very nature, revolutions provide the opportunity, even the necessity, for the redefinition of national interests and the selection of policies to realize those newly defined interests. To predict the interests which a revolutionary regime will seek to realize and the policies it will select to do so, particularly while that regime strives for greater political institutionalization, is a particularly difficult challenge.

→ The Islamic Republic of Iran under Ayatollah Khomeini is a case in point. The regime consistently has refused to sacrifice some of its basic tenets even in the face of evidence that its "objective" interests would dictate their moderation. Thus, no effort has been made to lessen the xenophobia gripping Iran, particularly that directed against the United States, in the interest of contributing to enhancing the military capabilities of Iran's armed forces in the face of the Iraqi invasion. To imagine the likelihood of that policy's remaining for the indefinite future given the still tenuous stability of the Ayatollah's system is even more challenging.

→ Yet to face these imponderables is the challenge of this paper. Irrespective of the outcome of the political struggles in Iran, and the longevity of Ayatollah Khomeini and his regime, certain processes have been unleashed by the Iranian revolution which are likely to affect the midrange future of any successor regime whether it reimposes the monarchy or inaugurates the "Islamic socialism" of the Mujahedin-e Khalq. At least eight such processes are evident.

- Iranian culture has always been marked by a profound ambivalence to non-Iranian cultures. On the one hand, Iranians have been ready to adopt the behavioral styles of those foreign systems seen as, somehow, more advanced than Iran. On the other, Iranians share a pervasive belief in the superiority of their own culture and in the inevitability of its eventual triumph even if the cost is the incorporation of many of the elements of foreign cultures. The Iranian response to the conquering Islamic Arabs in the 8th century is a classic example.

Reza Shah played on this ambivalence of his subjects with great astuteness. He was an unashamed "modernizer" who forced the Iranian people to adopt a vast array of European behaviors, administrative and political practices, and cultural styles. But at the same time, he insisted on the vigorous assertion of Iranian independence from foreign political influence and the financing of

his ambitious development schemes completely without the aid of foreign loans.

His son, Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, seemed to many of his countrymen to have followed his father's practices in terms of mimicking the West while forgetting his father's admonitions about political independence. One of the sources of revolutionary energy in 1978 stemmed from the widespread sense that Iranian ambivalence towards outsiders had been drastically ignored by the Shah.

One result has been the vigorous assertion of a profound xenophobia, to the United States in particular—the country which served as a reference figure for the Shah—but to virtually every other country as well. The aspect of Iran's cultural ambivalences contrary to that shown by the Shah—hostility—is now being asserted. But that xenophobia is unlikely to remain indefinitely for it violates Iran's centuries long ambivalence as surely as did the Shah's emphasis.

Before that traditional ambivalence can be reestablished, Iran must undergo a process in which the xenophobia unleashed by the revolution can be slaked. While it is impossible to specify the duration of such a process—too many factors may alter its course—it is unlikely to be resolved quickly. Any Iranian regime in the 1980's can be expected to reflect substantially the same xenophobia, albeit in increasingly muted forms.

- The question of oil production is central to every political regime in Iran. It is significant that those of Prime Minister Mossadegh and Ayatollah Khomeini chose a course which led to dramatically lower levels of production than previously. In the 1951-53 period, Mossadegh's strategy was to achieve his maximalist goals for the nationalization of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC), a strategy which failed as AIOC was able to develop alternative sources of supply, especially in neighboring Kuwait. When the Shah was returned to power he maintained the facade of nationalization while in fact he returned much of the control over Iran's oil production to the "consortium" newly reconstituted to include 40 percent ownership by US firms, 14 percent to Royal Dutch Shell, 6 percent to the French, and only 40 percent to the British.

The drop in production which followed the second—and permanent—ouster of the Shah has led to more substantial consequences, a near doubling of international oil prices. As

virtually all of the 5.6 million barrels of oil which the Shah supplied were withdrawn from international markets, Western consumers frantically outbid each other for the remaining supplies. Prices more than doubled to \$40 per barrel, more recently slipping back to \$30.

Two processes in Iran are reflected in its oil policy—a concern for the effects of oil wealth on the Iranian people and the commitment by the regime to rapid industrialization. Prime Minister Mossadeqh frequently articulated the fear that abundant oil wealth was destroying the strengths of Iranian culture. During the revolution of 1978, many of the clerics as well as secular intellectuals made similar claims. They worried over the personal and cultural aestheticism being overwhelmed by abundance and consumption. They feared for the destruction of the communal values of Iran being subverted by the individualism sustained by competitive, acquisitive capitalism. One of the principal virtues which a reemphasis of Islam has restored has been the notion of social community, the brotherhood of all believers.

Again, the emphasis on these values shown by the regime is as extreme as was the emphasis of the former royal regime in the contrary direction. But clearly, what is at work here is another process—similar to Iran's stance towards foreigners—which will eventually work its way through the political system. In the short run, continued emphasis on harmony and aestheticism can be expected, with accompanying low levels of oil production. In the longer run, more balance between these conflicting values can be expected, but it is unlikely that Iran will return to the rapid industrialization of competitive capitalism. As a result, it is unlikely that Iran will restore its previous technologically maximal levels of sustainable oil production.

- Another factor argues against any short-run return to high levels of oil production—the collapse of the Shah's vision of converting Iran to one of the world's ten richest countries by the year 2000. While the specifics of that goal changed as the Shah confronted different audiences and his grandiosity waxed or waned, he consistently pushed for the industrialization of Iran. Industries were necessary, he argued, to provide alternative sources of wealth as Iran's oil would be depleted by the end of the century. The result was a program of massive imports of industrial plant and foreign technicians as well as the rapid construction of

communications, energy, bureaucratic, and educational infrastructures.

The Shah's vision was not widely shared by Iranians. To the contrary, they saw that vision responsible for many of the ills of the Pahlavi regime. It is unlikely that any successor regimes in the foreseeable future would once again reassert the significance of industrialization. As a result, Iran's need for imports will remain relatively low—yet another impetus to lower oil production. There will, of course, be some industrial and other development projects in Iran under any regime. Foreign exchange will be necessary for them to import food and other basic necessities. But given high oil prices, the need for an oil production level even remotely approaching that of 1978 seems slight. In fact, for 1982-83, the regime counts on foreign exchange needs which can be met through the daily export of approximately 1.5 million barrels of oil.

- A fourth difference which will characterize post-Pahlavi Iran is the role of the military. Both monarchs of the Pahlavi dynasty based their rule on the military. Reza Shah was explicit about that reliance. He was a military officer who staged a coup and then used his base as military commander to become Minister of War, Prime Minister, and Shah. His most trusted administrators were former generals and spending for the military always took a major share of his budget. His son's only "higher education" was in Tehran's Officer School and the area of Iranian life which was of central concern to him was the armed forces. Not merely did it have spending priority over all other areas of national life, but more importantly, it had priority in the allocation of his time and attention. The Shah controlled three areas by, in effect, acting as his own cabinet minister—the military, foreign affairs, and petroleum. He saw all three as inevitably interrelated, as part of the stance of Iran vis-a-vis the rest of the world.

The efforts of the Pahlavis were especially striking because for hundreds of years previously there had been no national military capability. Armed tribesmen and villagers along with various other paramilitary forces were mobilized in times of threat but few resources were expended and no national military tradition grew, as was the case in the Ottoman Empire. Despite the impressive, even startling, recent successes of the Iranian military against the invading Iraqis, the role of the military under the Pahlavis is unlikely to be restored.

• Not only will the military not be a central institution, but the future military of Iran will not be beholden to a single foreign state as was the case under the Shah. For the Shah violated yet another central pattern of Iranian history—maintaining Iran's independence by playing off those great powers competing for influence in Iran. During the entire 19th century, Iranian monarchs played the British off against the Russians balancing the granting of concessions and the presence of British and Russian institutions within the country. That pattern continued into this century as Iran used the British against the pressures of the Bolsheviks who supported various independence movements in Iran as well as the Soviet sponsored trade unions. When the pressures from those powers became too great, however, the Shahs would call for a third power to enter the competition, first France, then Germany and most recently, the United States. But Mohammad Reza Shah violated the precise symmetry of those patterns by allying himself completely with the United States. He abandoned Iran's policy of "balanced neutrality" in favor of seeking the advantages from the embrace of a single great power.

Whatever advantages the Shah perceived in that embrace, the remainder of the Iranian people saw their country as falling under American hegemony and their ruler as a tool of American foreign policy. Thus, a central theme of the revolution was the need to reassert the widely perceived lost national independence of Iran. While the Khomeini regime played on the cultural values of xenophobia to reassert that independence, future regimes in Iran are likely to return to a more active role in international affairs.

The United States and United Kingdom are seen as the principal enemies of Iranian national integrity. The psychological dependence of the Shah on the United States, US sponsorship of the 1953 coup which restored the Shah to his throne, and US dominance of Iranian development since then suggests that any future Iranian regime will, at best, be willing to establish distant, if formally correct, relations with the United States.

The USSR, long interested in subverting the Iranian state and establishing a puppet regime if not actually annexing Iran outright, is seen as a palpable threat to Iranian independence. (Of course that the USSR has never succeeded in establishing a "puppet regime" in Iran stands it in good stead vis-a-vis the United States which is seen as having succeeded in doing so.) The invasion of Afghanistan, moreover, is understood by Iranians as a fate which confronts them

as well. Iranian regimes in the 1980's, as a result, are likely to establish "correct" interstate relations with the USSR hoping to benefit from Soviet technical assistance and access to Soviet markets while simultaneously moving against indigenous Communist movements to preclude a repeat of the Afghan debacle.

Closer relations will be established, wherever possible, with Muslim states, Third World states not tainted by a history of dependency, and those European states which have been relatively less active as imperial powers, especially in Iran.

- Iran has never had democratic political rule except for extremely short periods during the 20th century following the loosening of the pressures from an authoritarian political center. Support for democratic rule has come largely from a thin stratum of Westernized intelligentsia—a small fraction even of the politically involved.

Not only has there been little support for democratic institutions in the past, but many of democracy's (mostly student) advocates are now in exile. The "liberal" elements of the victorious revolutionary coalition were first driven from positions of power within the revolutionary regime and later, beginning with the summer of 1979 and with greater intensity after the capture of the US diplomats in November of 1979, were driven from the country. Their ability to alter the outcome of the present political struggles within the country is virtually negligible.

There are structural reasons as well for discounting the possibility of a democratic "solution" to those political struggles. The Shah's official title, Shahanshah, translates as "King of Kings" and under his rule the country was officially known as "the Empire of Iran." The different ethnic and linguistic groups of Iran, most of which are settled along Iran's borders, are separated from ethnic group members residing in adjacent countries. Those who speak Persian as their mother tongue are located in the center of the country in a strip which includes the major cities of Tehran, Isfahan, and Shiraz. As a result, the country is always beset by centrifugal processes threatening fragmentation. Only a strong centralizing pressure from the political center prevents the realization of such tendencies.

The most likely political organization for the 1980's is a repetition of the past—a centralized bureaucratic state which authoritatively imposes Persian domination over the ethnic groups of the periphery. Despite fears of the territorial disintegration of

the country expressed after the flight of the Shah, such disintegration seems increasingly unlikely. While quasi-independent rulers who paid at best nominal fealty to Iran were lost to the expanding Russian empire in the early 19th century, the present state boundaries of Iran have been maintained intact for many centuries. What has varied over time has been the ability of the center to control local lords, tribal chiefs, and petty despots. With the striking improvements in communication and military power which marked the last decades of the Shah's rule, it is unlikely that those local forces will again be able to maintain significant independence from the political center.

- If the present Islamic Republic of Iran succeeds in consolidating its power or is replaced by a regime which legitimates its control in the name of Islam, as is the case, for example, in Libya or Saudi Arabia, the inevitable result will be an aggressive, ideologically based foreign policy. That foreign policy will have twin goals. First, the regime will seek to solidify its claim to be the legitimate spokesman for Shi'ites throughout the Middle East, particularly along the southern coast of the Persian Gulf, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon. Second, the regime will seek to advance the interests of Islam, as defined in Tehran, in those states with Muslim populations whose governments are perceived as weak or insufficiently attentive to the demands of the faith.

These two goals are not easily compatible. Insofar as an Iranian regime claims to speak for Shi'ites, it differentiates itself further from the far larger Sunni populations of the Islamic world. But insofar as that regime purports to speak for all Muslims, it loses its distinctive Iranian-Shi'ite coloration and, with that, claims to legitimacy among Shi'ites.

The most likely outcome of this dilemma is that the regime will, nonetheless, seek to achieve both goals simultaneously. It will strive to export the Iranian revolution, not primarily by political or military means, but ideologically. Under conditions which the regime perceives as rare opportunities for expanding its influence, however, it is unlikely to be able to resist the temptation for more active attempts at subverting other states. The Iranian sponsored coup attempt in Bahrain, uncovered on December 15, 1981, is such an example. If the regime were secure at home and freed from fighting its war with Iraq, more such efforts to "liberate" Shi'ites would be attempted.

But irrespective of how the contradictions in its goals are resolved, or whether they are resolved at all, and irrespective of the outcome of both the war and the political struggle within Iran, a more aggressive Iranian foreign policy is likely. Ayatollah Khomeini and his clerical allies have stated again and again their belief in the validity of their message for the entire Muslim world and their willingness to struggle for its dissemination and ultimate acceptance. Only a successor regime which breaks sharply with the Islamic fundamentalism of the Ayatollah will be able to abandon those goals.

- The invasion of Iran by Iraq in September 1980 and the inordinate costs to Iran in its attempts to wrest its territories from Iraq have provided Iran with a new, dominating myth. The components of that myth strengthen Iranian disdain for the Arabs, heighten the conviction that Iran is beset by hostile and aggressive foreign powers, enhance the grandiosity of the revolutionary forces in their belief that virtually any task can be accomplished under the banner of a resurgent Islam, and, finally, foster the belief that acting alone largely through its own resources, Iran can achieve near magical goals.

The implications of the war and that myth for the entire Persian Gulf region are unsettling, to put it mildly. For as long as Ayatollah Khomeini or his clerical allies remain in power they will be driven to seek revenge from President Hussein of Iraq and his ally, King Hussein of Jordan. As the Ayatollah was able to wait 15 years to settle his score with the Shah, so will Iran be able to wait—for decades, if necessary—to settle its new score with the Arabs. And as surely as the Ayatollah felt compelled to wreak vengeance on the Shah, he will feel compelled to respond similarly to Iraq and Jordan.

A successor regime which breaks with the system of the Ayatollah and his allies will be less beholden to the failures of his foreign policies. But the myth generated by the Iraqi invasion will remain. And that myth will itself contribute to Iranian adventurism in the Gulf, but especially in Iraq. The most likely outcome is war through the open use of military force or proxy war through support for guerrilla or tribal groups or opposition forces.

This paper has argued that political regimes, especially revolutionary regimes, have wide latitude in defining both their national interests and the means by which they will pursue those interests. (It may be argued that belief in such latitude is a conceit

of revolutionary regimes which the hard lessons of political life will deflate. But in the Iranian case, it is likely that the entire decade of the 1980's will be necessary for such lessons to take hold.) Further complicating the analysis of the relative convergence of American and Iranian national interests in the midrange is the ongoing Iranian revolution. The faltering health of the "Supreme Jurisconsult," as Ayatollah Khomeini is sometimes known, has set off a succession struggle among his loyal followers which meshes with the efforts to seize power of opposition groups within and without the country. The result is a fragile political system whose primary energies are absorbed in perpetuating its own survival and evicting the occupying Iraqis. Such a political regime barely has the capacity to deal with the luxury of "national interest."

But this paper has argued that several themes or tendencies are likely to be manifest in Iran over the midrange. These include a pervasive xenophobia; a disinclination to offer vast amounts of petroleum to the world market; the deemphasis of the Shah's grandiose industrialization plans and of the role of the armed forces; an authoritarian, centralized, bureaucratic state structure; a pervasive thrust towards a "third world," "neutralist" foreign policy vis-a-vis the great powers and an aggressively Islamic foreign policy in the Middle East; plus an abiding commitment to revenge against Iraq.

Clearly this is not the Iran which the United States had in mind when it set about cultivating the Shah during the Mossadegh period. But that vision of Iran was, all too clearly, never permanently tenable. (What calls for explanation, in fact, is how successful the United States was in achieving that vision for such a lengthy period.) Nonetheless, while Iran in the 1980's is likely to pursue policies dramatically different from the Shah's era, some fundamental overlap with American national interests exists.

Policies will be pursued to maintain Iran's territorial integrity, guard its independence from Soviet domination, and insure the sale of some petroleum in world markets. These three policies are completely compatible with basic American interests. Only Iran's likely pursuit of an aggressive foreign policy in the Middle East is likely to run counter to American goals.

POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF THE US-SAUDI RELATIONSHIP

[from page 2]

→ The United States and Saudi Arabia have had a long, close, and fruitful association that has evolved despite cultural differences and periods of troubled US relations with the Middle East. Both nations have sought to retain effective relations, and these have been forged in the face of the strong pressures that could have shattered them. Yet, the two nations need to remain alert to dangers in their relationship and work to cement the factors that bind them together and to minimize the factors that tend to separate them. ↙

CONVERGENT FACTORS

Numerous factors conducive to convergence exist in both Saudi Arabia and the United States. Several of these concern similar perceptions about threat, but many have to do with the amount of interaction in military, economic, and political endeavors.

Perhaps most importantly, the long Saudi experience with the United States stands out as the key factor in their relationship.

Since the inception of the Saudi kingdom, a close series of ties have bound the two together. For the Saudis there has been a feeling that they do not wish to disturb these ties, and it could even be said that the relationship is the result of Saudi inertia. For both countries, there has been the belief that even though there may be problems in the relationship, somehow they will be worked out in the context of the overall relationship.

A second major factor in the relationship has been the Saudi dependency on the United States for its military equipment and training, shown by the reliance on the United States for most Saudi military equipment, spare parts, and training; US advisory personnel have proven reliable and impartial. The extensive US presence in all of the Saudi military structures demonstrates this reliance. Especially important has been the role of the US Military Training Mission (USMTM) over many years and, more recently, the close working nature of the US involvement in the Saudi Arabian National Guard (SANG) Modernization Project and the extensive, if not pervasive, presence of the Corps of Engineers in military construction projects throughout the Kingdom. The USMTM relationship is seen by the Saudis as a kind of "plate glass window" security assurance, and they see the intermingling of US efforts as an assurance of US interests.

A constant theme in Saudi concerns is the threat of encirclement. First, there were regional dynastic threats from Iraq, Jordan, and from peripheral Arabian Peninsula states. In the 1960's the Egyptian pan-Arab furor erupted and now there is the fear of Soviet encirclement. Then as now the Saudis looked to the United States to meet these threats. There does not seem to be an early lessening of their fears and, to them, the United States represents the best pillar of support.

- To the Saudis, Iran poses the main threat because of Iran's announced "revolution for export" and because of Iran's historical desire to dominate the Gulf. Even during the days of the Shah, Iran's desire to dominate the Gulf concerned the Saudis. The Shi'a threat that could evolve in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province and Hofuf, combined with the events in Bahrain in December 1981, when a coup was uncovered, have raised Saudi fears of the Iranian challenge. The attempts to enlarge and expand the Saudi navy are discrete efforts to counter the Iranians.

- Saudi fear of the Soviet Union stems not from direct concern of an immediate confrontation, but from the threat that comes

from the Soviet proxies in the region. The invasion of Afghanistan was indeed worrisome, but not to the extent that if the Soviets were implanted permanently on the Indian Ocean or in the Gulf. Soviet surrogates in South Yemen and Ethiopia pose the real threat for the Saudis through the subversion and instability they generate against moderate regimes on the Peninsula.

- Apprehension concerning the Israelis is both psychological and real in view of the new Israeli boldness in bombing the Iraqi nuclear reactor and overflying Saudi Arabia and Jordan to do so. King Khalid saw Israel's ultimate ambition as taking all former Jewish sites to include Medinah. The Saudis truly believe that the United States could, if it wished, bring about a genuine Arab-Israeli peace and could also resolve the Palestinian issue.

- Iraqi ambitions raise Saudi fears; however, now that the Iraqis are mired down with the Iranians and not doing too well, they seem less of an immediate problem. Nevertheless, the Saudis will remain alert to future dangers from the Iraqis.

- Finally, the Saudis fear a spillover of other Middle East conflicts that could either draw them into undesired warfare or cause them to be embroiled in destabilizing internal circumstances. These might come from Syria and Iraq, the Iran-Iraq War, the Yemen civil war, or perhaps attempts by the South Yemenis to create problems for Oman.

Other major contributions to convergence are the pro-American attitudes and the thought processes of the ruling Saudi family elite, especially King Fahd and Prince Sultan. Even among those who do not have such a strong pro-American feeling there is, at least, a leaning in that direction. This feeling stems not just from their own personal beliefs, but from the dictum given them by Abdul Aziz that his successors "should retain a close relationship with the United States."

Continued Saudi reliance on US firms, particularly large ones, to supervise major Saudi developmental projects provides an additional convergence factor. The continued reliance on US oil companies for expertise in petroleum exploration, construction of facilities, and management functions further cement the ties.

Heavy Saudi financial investments in the United States to include money, land, and securities add to the feeling that close ties are essential. However, the Saudis have not put all their financial arrangements in the American monetary system. They have invested heavily in Japanese and West European markets as well.

The last of the convergence factors can perhaps be considered the large number of Saudis that have been educated in the United States and the numbers that are presently studying here. This, at the very least, eases dialogue between the two cultures and provides for a nucleus of trained Saudis that will understand the US perspective better.

DIVERGENT FACTORS

Very briefly, US-Saudi relations have been tempered through several periods of discord. First, with the creation of the state of Israel there was a trauma that rocked the Arab world. Next came the Baghdad Pact and the internal divisions within the region that resulted from it, followed by the US withdrawal from the Dhahran Airfield and the circumstances that surrounded it in the early 1950's. The Saudis saw this as an attempt by the United States to disengage from them and from the region. The US unwillingness to designate Israel as the aggressor in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War resulted in strong Saudi displeasure with US policies. The 1973 Arab-Israeli War and the oil embargo which followed were evidence of strong divergence. Finally, the Camp David accords and the negative Saudi reaction again showed the degree of divergence between the two nations. However, none of these events resulted in a total break in the relationship, but led to new convergences arising to put the two back on a sympathetic track.

Currently several factors condition the Saudi views about the United States and cause the two to have some degree of divergence:

- Increasing Saudi doubts about US willingness to bring about what Saudis regard as a fair Arab-Israeli settlement.
- Uncertainty about the Reagan Administration's Middle East policy.
- Doubts about US reliability in assuring the external security of Saudi Arabia.
- Concern over pressure from the United States to obtain bases in the country.
- Sensitivity to vilification of Saudi Arabia in the United States.
- Suspicion in some Saudi quarters that the US Government encouraged derogatory statements about the royal family by a former CIA station chief. He was subsequently forced to leave the country.

- The influence of the pro-Israeli lobby on the US Government and the Congress.
- Sensitivity to charges from other Arab countries that Saudi Arabia is an American client-state causes the growing Saudi need to emphasize the Arab identity of the state.
- The emergence of a new generation of princes and commoners who are not as convinced of the need for a "special relationship" with the United States as the older generation is.
- The view of some younger, American-trained Saudis that the US Government is too committed to the preservation of the Saud family rule rather than to a commitment to Saudi Arabia.
- The high cost of US military equipment, slow deliveries, DOD price vacillations, constant congressional objections to the sale of sophisticated military items to Saudi Arabia and the resultant desire to diversify arms supplies as well as the growing concern over the high cost of maintaining the Corps of Engineers. Many Saudis feel that Saudi Arabia has been dragged through the mud and humiliated by the course of the US debates over the recent arms sales (especially AWAC's), and object to what they see as ignorance and maliciousness.
- An increasing sense of Saudi self-reliance, even arrogance, by some senior Saudi princes, Cabinet ministers, and bureaucratic members. This attitude provides for a more "do it alone" attitude, and might lead to a much more independent policy in matters of concern to the United States.
- Worries that the United States might freeze Saudi financial assets in the United States as was done with Iranian money. Also, latent concern that the United States might decide to take over Saudi oil fields as a former Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, had stated as an American contingency option.
- Finally, US pressures on the Saudis to take on more than they are capable or willing to do. The United States often asks the Saudis to make choices they do not want, or to take actions that would damage them politically. (The Camp David Agreements are a case in point.) The United States cannot expect Saudi Arabia always to be its advocate.

CONCLUSIONS

Fundamentally, the problem between the United States and Saudi Arabia stems from the Saudi fear and concern about US political actions and the Saudi sense of disappointment and frustration with the lack of viable movement on the Arab-Israeli front and in settling the Palestinian question.

The United States must not take Saudi Arabia for granted. We must be much more sensitive to Saudi legitimate concerns and factor these into our policy considerations. We need to improve our dealings with the Saudis by being more frank with them. For their part, the Saudis speak in generalities that are subject to interpretation. They are not particularly venturesome and exercise great prudence and caution. When problems arise, they tend to pull back into a shell and mull over their options. A response, if there is one at all, will be well considered and consensual. The United States must become more aware of the Saudi political landscape and must send sensitive people to the Kingdom who are able to correctly interpret the country to the US Government.

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